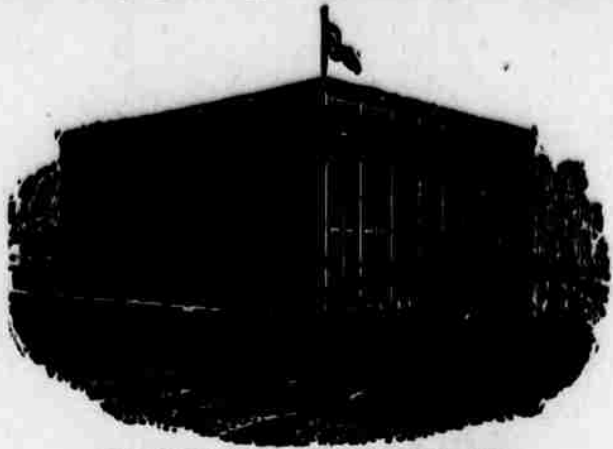


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LOSSES IN BATTLE.

What the Next Great War May Have in Store for the Contestants.

The improvements which have of late years been given to the implements of destruction have sometimes filled both soldiers and civilians with gloomy horror of what the next great war may have in store for us, says the London Saturday Review. Where muskets were formerly used we are in future to find Maxims and magazine rifles, and men are to be slain wholesale scientifically, just as fields are reaped rapidly and cleanly in wadways by machinery, in place of by the slower process of individual exertion. The tale of what has just been done by the Maxim guns in South Africa has especially drawn our attention to the new methods of killing.

Bravery and self-sacrifice were altogether unavailing in the face of the relentless destroyers, and we must thank the skill of the mechanic as the military virtues of our men—bravery as they be themselves—for the result. The mind, dwelling on such experiences, naturally leaps to the conclusion that when vast armies, both fully equipped by modern science, meet on the field of battle, the loss of life will attain dimensions absolutely appalling. The nerves of soldiers will be strong indeed if, after all that has been said and written on the subject, they can enter the next campaign without those uneasy forebodings that are the sure preparation for panic and disaster.

For it is not what does happen, or even what has happened, so much as what may happen that makes towards us all. As a nervous rider once said of a horse: "It is not what he has done, but what he might do that I fear." The history of war has recorded how men who had stood up firmly against the charges of fire of a foe that they could see, even in spite of terrible losses, have recoiled, panic stricken like a flock of sheep, when—perhaps wholly imaginary—cry of "A mine!" was raised in the path of their assault. The heart shudders at the notion of whole ranks of companies swept away in a few moments by a sudden blast of fire and this, and nothing else, is what the Cassandras of the day foreboded in the struggles of the future.

It is not so much how many men you kill as how you kill them that makes the difference; above all, the span of time in which the hits are obtained is important. It is perfectly conceivable that a foe which had lost 50 per cent. of its strength might continue to hold a position which under other circumstances it would have been evacuated when but 10 per cent. of its strength had been laid low. Human nature is such that troops do not retire because their ranks have grown too weak for the task in hand. What shakes their nerve is the fear of the loss they may sustain if they remain where they are or push forward in their advance.

A sort of instinctive calculation is, in fact, going on in the minds of men in action which makes one side or the other suddenly come to the conclusion that it can no longer hold its ground. And the unconscious calculation is apt to work out its conclusions most dangerously and most irresistibly when the losses on which it is mainly based occur in a very short time, so as to appeal powerfully to the imagination of those who witness them. And the shorter the period the more overpowering becomes the conviction which takes possession of the soldier's mind.

It is for this reason that Skobeloff's chief of the staff, Prince Kourapatkin, has told us that experience had shown him that a battalion which has lost 100 men in a fight spread over ten hours may more confidently be relied on to stand firm than one which has lost fifty men in five minutes. The sum of the physical strength of the latter body remains greater than that of the former, but the sum of its moral force is for the time being less. The leader who understands men, and is quick to observe the signs of demoralization, will, if he seizes the timely moment and falls on that battalion, gain a victory. If, however, he hesitates and lets the golden moments slip the balance in his opponents' minds may be restored, and the moral effect of his fire, which is the determining element in fighting, will be wasted.

Men will, in fact, grow callous and accustomed to the sight of any number of their comrades given intervals of rest to recover themselves, so long as the strain is not put upon them too suddenly and does not increase too rapidly. Instances to support this statement might easily be adduced from military history.

The detachments of some of the Russian guns during the siege of Sebastopol suffered so terribly under our fire that they were renewed as often as three daily, and yet their fire showed no perceptible slackening. Similar heroism was exhibited in our trenches too, and losses which in the aggregate were immense failed to terrify, because they grew gradually and were in some measure forgotten. Now, the characteristic which most distinguishes the fire of modern weapons is not so much its range and precision as its intensity.

The Hardest Word.
It is a simple little word, containing only two letters, and yet it is the hardest word to pronounce, in the English language. You have guessed what it is, of course, at once the problem is not very deep. It is the word "No." How many times it has seemed to us as if we would give half a lifetime not to be obliged to say it! How we have turned matters over in our mind and tried to temporize—tried to see if we could not discover some loop hole by which we could escape, but all to no purpose. The inexorable hand of fate was on us, and the weighty little word must be uttered.

One of the greatest boons parents can bestow upon their children is to give them through precept and example, the ability to resist persuasion toward wrong, and firmly refuse, when principle dictates that as the correct course.

There are times, however, when "no" comes only too readily to a parent's lips. With many, when a child takes a favor the first impulse is to refuse. There seems the slightest difficulty in the way. A moment's reflection would have shown a path out of the trouble, and the child

might have been made happy. So his useless tears as this, and the whole after life of the little one and show the parents up in an unenviable light.

Think well before you say "No" to the earnest request of your children, and then say it, if necessary, in a way which will show them that it is hard for you to do so, and that only stern necessity compels you to use their plea.

The Conductor Was Gane.

"I witnessed a funny incident out at Beloitville, on the Cairo Short line, last week," said Manuel G. Riado, a cigar salesman at the Linell last night. "A railroad man had got aboard the train and tried to work the conductor for a ride. The conductor refused and told him to get off at the first stop. When the station was reached, he did not get off but gave the conductor 30 cents, all the money he had, to ride on to the next station. When that station was reached, the conductor took pains to see that he got off. After the conductor had given the signal to go ahead, and the engineer had started the train, the railroad man called the conductor a hard name.

"The conductor was up in a moment and notwithstanding the fact that the train was under headway, he ran after the man who ran. The conductor ran a ter him, forgetting all about his train. He caught him and proceeded to thrash him in the most approved fashion. A number of passengers had rushed to the rear platform to see the fun. The brakeman, seeing the crowd, hurried back, and saw the conductor a half mile back, unsmiling in his anger. He stayed the train and had the engineer back up. The conductor got aboard, calmly washed his hands and resumed his duties refusing to discuss the matter or saying what he would have done had his train not been stopped when it was."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

A Well-Matched Couple.

A couple of mature age were lately married. After the congratulations of parents and friends, the party assembled to partake of the wedding banquet, during which the nephew of the bride slipped under the table, like a serpent, and suddenly rose, exclaiming:

"A tooth! Who has lost a tooth?"

"My sister," laughed out the bride's little brother; "she lost it yesterday."

"The poor bride, not knowing how to extricate herself, resorted to fainting. The old dames tittered, the young misses whispered, and the under of the tooth received a cuff that made him see full three-dozen steaming candles. As to the bridegroom, impassable, like the sage of Horace, he besprinkled the fair bride with eau-de-cologne and vinegar.

"Where am I?" muttered the poor bride, opening her eyes and closing her lips.

"In the midst of your friends and in your husband's arms."

"What then has happened?"

"Alas!"

"Something alarming, then?"

"Alarming! It's enough to make one pluck the hair from one's head."

Thus saying, the husband carried his hand to his waving locks, and plucked off a magnificent wig. A burst of laughter followed this act of conjugal heroism, and the merriment of the company improved a couplet upon the future happiness of the pair so well matched.

Advice to the Housecleaner.

Just why it is no one seems to know, but there seems to be a rooted prejudice among women that the more manual labor they have to perform, the less they eat, and at times of housecleaning, not only themselves, but every one concerned, is made uncomfortable by a ant meal, irregularly served. With a little extra trouble, even on the day when the dining-room itself is cleaned, some comfortable place can be found where a well-cooked meal can be enjoyed. Instead of this as a general thing, all is hurry-burly and bustle, and in order to get the work done from attic to cellar, nothing goes on in its usual way. What wonder that the housekeeper is "all dragged out," by the time the process is over?

When great physical strain is being endured, is the time the body should be most particularly nourished. A good lunch prepares the system for a renewed attack upon the work of the day, while a meager meal leaves it but little refreshed.

Keeping Up Appearance.

A member of the sanitary board of one of our large towns came across a boy the other day who was wheeling home a load of tins and bottles, and, curious to know to what use the lad could put them, he made a direct inquiry.

"Going to throw them into our backyard," replied the boy. "I took two loads home yesterday."

"But what do you see them for?"

"It's a trick of the family," grinned the lad.

"In what way?"

"I might as well tell," continued the boy. "We're going to have some relish come from the country. We may not have much to eat; but, if they see these tins, and bottles, and boxes, they'll think we've had hoysters, champagne, and all the rest of it, till we've got tired of 'em, and a livin' on bread and taters for a healthy change!"

The member of the sanitary board scratched his ear like a man who had received a new idea.

A Curious French Custom.

Before the revolution of 1789, it was customary in France for a man who had been invited out to dinner, to send his servant ahead of him with his knife, fork, and spoon. Should he have no servant, he himself would carry them in his pocket when he attended the dinner. Just what the idea was, we do not know, unless they were so expensive that no household could afford more than enough to go around among its own members. Would not the good old dames of those days open their eyes could they come back at the present period and behold the wealth of silver, glass, china, and everything else which combines to make luxury, that is present in so many houses now!

ALTHOUGH this is a free country, no man has the right to choose between smallpox and vaccination.

THE BICYCLE AND THE BULL.

The Former Got Badly Rung and the Latter Broke His Neck.

A recent occurrence in the neighborhood of West Chester, Pa., adds two items to our stock of information says the Washington Post. The first item is that a bull can be infuriated by something besides a red rag, and the second is that a thoroughly infuriated bull can overtake the average bicycle. All of which is important. It seems that John Harsey of Baltimore, accompanied by two friends, was making a tour of the country on his bicycle. The party had evidently made a good progress since they had got as far as West Chester, which must be nearly ninety miles from Baltimore. Furthermore they had done this without any hostile demonstration on the part of the inhabitants. Nobody seems to have shot at them or even thrown stones or bad language at them. The heavy plegmatic temperament of the Pennsylvania Dutch had born the invasion with equanimity, and the invaders had every reason to suppose that they would reach Philadelphia without provoking any great popular outburst of resistance.

While passing along a road in East Goshen Township, however, the bicyclists attracted the attention of a bull. The bull apparently was not phlegmatic. He seems, on the contrary, to have been a hot-headed and impulsive bull, and the sight of the three Baltimore gentlemen on wheels goaded him to fury. Probably they said something offensive to him. Probably they had red faces or discolored sanguine tempaments, or laughed ironically as they went by. That is as may be. But the bull pawed one paw, bellowed one bellow, and to k after them. It is more than likely that John Harsey thought it rather a joke to be pursued by a lumbering brute like a bull, and told himself that he would astonish that besotted animal before he got through with him. The average bicyclist is a haughty person, and his plying score of things that go on legs is as profound as it is genuine. Mr. Harsey had not gone very far, however, before he realized that just astern of him was a quadruped of great activity and bottom. In fact, to make a long story short, the bull caught Mr. Harsey, tore his bicycle all to pieces, tossed the gentleman himself about with great enthusiasm and finally, in an effort to escape Mr. Harsey entirely from the equation, fell down and broke his own neck. Mr. Harsey was collected by his friends and carried to a place called the hospital. The bull was, we suppose, turned over to the butcher, and so the incident closed.

The Reporter's Little Mistake.

A reporter in this city who is well-known had an experience last week which bordered on the embarrassing; that is, it would have been embarrassing to any average man, but it is not reasonable to suppose that this reporter, though young, was non-plussed even a little bit.

He was assigned to interview a distinguished gentleman who lives in a palace on the hill. At the door the reporter was met by a young lady, celebrated even in Cincinnati, for her good looks.

"Is Mr. Z. in?" asked Mr. Fleet-foot.

"I'm sorry to say he is not," was the gracious answer.

"I was sent out," said the reporter, "to interview him about a little matter and will call again."

He was becoming perceptibly impressed by the witching face before him. No doubt he would like to call again. The young lady, too, might have had some impressionable element in her makeup, or at least she had a natural curiosity to know who the reporter was.

"Won't you leave your card," she said. "Brother can call you up by telephone when he comes in."

There's where the boy made a mistake. He ought to have insisted on calling again, but he forgot himself and said:

"Yes, I guess I had better leave my card," and sulking the action to the work he delivered into his card-case and left his card, as he thought. The young lady turned to the light to scan the card, and Mr. Fleet-foot at the same instant turned rearwardly, with scarcely a conventional good evening. He had scarcely taken a step when the young lady said, in a voice filled with merriment:

"Oh, I beg your pardon, but am I to consider this an invitation to dinner, or have you made a mistake?"

Fleet-foot turned back and received the card from her outstretched hand.

It was his meal ticket. He made a blushing correction and a hasty departure.—Cincinnati Tribune.

Wasted Time.

In the present state of the working classes, the remarks made by a writer in a foreign magazine, should be well weighed. He says, in effect, that a prolific source of time wasted by discontented workmen, is the ineffectual preparation for a strike often made for the work attempted. A very large portion of the suffering to the unemployed at this time comes from the cause. With thousands of men and women asking for work it is as difficult as ever in many departments to find skilled or even efficient laborers. Few well-prepared and capable workers are idle even in these hard times. Those who think to save time by skipping the necessary discipline and drill, and rushing into their work with little instruction or practice, are but laying the foundation for lifelong disappointment.

A Volcano That Spouts Pure Water.

One of the greatest natural curiosities in Central America is the Volcan de Agua, or water volcano, which is situated in Guatemala, about twenty-five miles southwest of the capital. Its apex is 14,450 feet above the level of the sea, and cultivated fields and forest trees extend almost to its summit. It occasionally vents forth torrents of pure, cold water. In 1868 an "eruption" of this kind inundated the northern valley and destroyed a whole village situated on the side of the peak.—St. Louis Republic.

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